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INDIA FOR SALE:

KASHMIR SOLD.

BY

W. SEDGWICK,

MAJOR, R.E.,

Author of "Light, the Dominant Force of the Universe;" "Life: the Explanation of It;" &c.

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"They did not believe in the love of the Sepoy, but they believed in his fidelity to his Pay."—*Kaye's "Sepoy War in India," Vol. I, page 326.*

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PREFACE.

* * * the widespread English-ism of the Dalhousie School.—*Kaye's "Sepoy War in India," Vol. 1, p. 388.*

IT is manifest that we have finally abandoned the idea of trying to gain the confidence of the people of India, by acquiring a thorough knowledge of their modes of thought and prejudices, and by studying their manners and ways; and have determined that they must conform to our standard and adopt our ideas and ways, if there is to be a better understanding between us in the future.

This determination was very clearly expressed by the introduction of competition for appointments in the Civil Service of India, by which we abandoned, as of little worth, the greater part of the stores of knowledge of the people and of their ways, accumulated by the experience of successive generations, in the families which, under the system of nomination, supplied India with its Civil and Military Officers; and affirmed that for the ruling of India a general knowledge of the world, rather than a special acquaintance with things Indian, is most required.

This has also, perhaps, been even still more clearly enunciated of late by the introduction of the

55 years' limit of age for civil appointments, by which we deliberately abandoned a large part of the stores of knowledge of the people and of their ways, accumulated by individuals in the course of their service in India, just as we abandoned, by introducing competition, the greater part of the stores accumulated by families which for many generations sent their sons regularly to India ; and have affirmed that activity and energy are of more importance than experience in governing India.

This, too, was expressed by the introduction of the rule limiting the tenure of appointments to five years, which affirms that the principle on which we intend to govern has been finally determined; that the work of ruling is routine work, which can be done equally well by one as by another; and that there are no subtle points demanding for their elucidation special qualifications and the largest measure of experience.

The tendency of these measures is unmistakable. The policy they indicate, which may be said to be one of alienation, has, we may remark, to commend it the success attained by the Brahmin conquerors of India, who seem to have forced the aboriginal population to conform or keep aloof and retire to the hills and jungles; and who alone of all the conquerors of India, have impressed their mark indelibly upon it.

It would seem also that a considerable measure of success is likely to attend the adoption of this policy in our case, too. The successful introduction of railways, with the education and the enlargement of the ideas which railway travelling gives, is conducing largely to this, and will conduce far more largely in the future,

when railway officers come to appreciate the importance of getting the people to move about in a country such as this, where the population is so unequally distributed; and proceed to study the wants of third class passenger traffic. The establishment of schools on a large scale, and the extension of school education, is also conducing largely to it. And now, between railways and schools, there is growing up about the large cities a generation more or less deeply imbued with Western ideas, with all their freshness and their fascination, antagonistic to the fatalism and fanaticism of the East—a generation who, in due course, will necessarily shake themselves free from old ties and old associations.

The advance has been so marked that now, if we are left alone to work upon the lines on which we have latterly been working, the renovation of India is inevitable, though, perhaps, not exactly in the form we contemplate.

However, it is plain that in a country containing very many millions of people, a policy of this sort demands absolutely for its success that those who introduce it should be left alone in their work; for it is manifestly one calculated in its development to provoke opposition, more especially in the conservative East: and it is now plain also that we shall not be left alone to work. The late advance of the Russian army, and the extension of the Russian railway system which is being effected to the border of Afghanistan, puts that out of the question.

Even if Russia were to make no further advance and were now to sit down quietly to develop the resources of the large amount of territory she has

lately acquired, the effect of this move would still be felt. It is inevitable that Natives of the old school, both good and bad, will object strongly to the change which is being effected in India by our present policy, and their discontent will increase as the reality of the change becomes more marked. They will necessarily turn to Russia—more conservative, more Asiatic, more accommodating as she is. The ambitious, too, will turn to her with the better prospects of employment which she offers. The *badmash*—the Pindhari element—kept down now with a strong hand, but everywhere present in Eastern cities, will also look to Russia. The discontented, the ambitious, and the lawless will alike trade upon the presence of Russia by misrepresenting that they have her sympathy and aid, even if she gives them in reality no assistance and no encouragement; and, in times of trouble or of scarcity, will have opportunities which they had not before.

But this move of Russia is not meaningless, being, as it is, a reply to our action in sending Indian troops to the Mediterranean in 1878, in preventing the occupation of Constantinople.

Russia was forced by our action in 1878 to shew her hand; her plan of playing it has also been disclosed. The plan is Skobeleff's plan—the plan of a close observer, and of a man who was in downright earnest in all matters concerning Russian interests.

I have endeavoured to shew the strong cards which Russia holds; and also how we can effectually foil this plan of hers, if we will set to work in earnest and give our undivided attention to the matter.

Kaye, in his "History of the Sepoy War in India" (Vol. I, p. 342) tells us, that in India, even so far back

as 1856, "there had long been a chronic belief that the Russ-logue would some day or other contend with us for the mastery of India; that coming down in immense hordes from the North, and carrying with them the intervening Mahomedan States, they would sweep us, broken and humbled, into the sea." It is manifest that recent events have in no way tended to dispel such a belief.

INDIA FOR SALE:

KASHMIR SOLD.

CHAPTER I.

CHANGED.

THERE can be little doubt that a crisis is approaching—a time when our mode of life as a nation will be put on its trial to stand or to fall.

With the exception, perhaps, of Russia, our form of Government, bringing with it some of our love of liberty, has spread over the whole of the civilised world in the form of a limited monarchy as one extreme, or a limited republic as the other. It will be no light matter, therefore, to the world at large if we are suppressed—if our institutions are discredited.

We have been so uniformly successful in the past that we are unable to bring ourselves really to believe that we can be otherwise than successful in the future, and yet a great change has taken place of late. The conditions under which our success was attained are not the conditions which now obtain. We ourselves, too, are changed,—certainly in some respects for the better; possibly in many for the worse. Changed, too, are all our neighbors. Are we fully alive to the character of the change?

Have we, for example, at all appreciated the importance of the federating tendency now abroad in the world? Greek has united with Greek and formed a Greek Kingdom; Italian has joined Italian and formed an united Italy; German has drawn to German and formed a Prussian Empire. And now it may almost be said that old Grece and old Rome are on their legs again, instinct with new life; while the Mussulmans, even, are beginning to get restless and to look out for a Mahdi; and decrepit China beginning to wake up.

Then, side by side with this federating tendency, there is manifestly also a tendency towards disintegration abroad.

We have seen France disintegrated and Turkey disintegrated; but can it be true that there are signs of disintegration in the British Empire also? Is there then no significance in the present agitation for Home Rule in Ireland; none in the doubts now at times openly expressed as to whether our Colonies are not a burden rather than an advantage?

The federating tendency is plainly due to the improved means of communication which Telegraphs, Railways, and Steamers supply,—all tending to enlarge the sphere of influence of the individual, and to consolidate the nations whose peoples are willing to draw together, and are prepared to submit to the restraints and to make the sacrifices which consolidation must entail.

Plainly, also, the tendency towards disintegration is due to the same cause, and to the fact that, where mutual dislike exists, hatred is deepened when individuals are brought closer together; also to the fact that those peoples who do not rise to the occasion, are unable to cope with the increased vigor of those who do.

But, then, in order that this federating tendency may act to advantage, it is plain there must be some well-defined centre to which individuals may draw, otherwise they will collect into groups and parties, and group will pull against group, wasting the energies of the nation. Have we recognised this fact, that the tendency of the future must, wherever there is progress, be in the direction of monarchy and not of democracy; that the strong wise man, who knows how to turn to account the advantages which improved means of communication supply, will become stronger than ever in the future? A Napoleon, with the Telegraph, the Locomotive, and the Steam-ship to aid him, need no longer dream in vain of dominating the world.

We do, perhaps, indeed, realise the fact that our empire is a commercial empire; and that it has come to us from the possession of great stores of coal and of iron ore, and of a population endowed with the spirit of enterprise and with a love of adventure, which have brought them into

contact with the peoples of all hands, and sent them wandering to every habitable spot upon the earth. Our advantages in these respects were once so great as to attract to us artisans and mechanics, who, being driven out from, or ill-appreciated by other countries, settled amongst us, and finding a welcome, taught us how to develop our resources and how best to turn our advantages to account, with the result of placing us at the head of all manufacturing countries with a monopoly for a long time of many of the principal articles of commerce, bringing in vast accumulations of wealth. But it was one thing to make money by improved manufactures, by spirited trading-ventures in foreign lands, by the excellence of our wares; and quite another thing to make money by speculating on the Stock Exchange in the shares of this Company or of that, having no other concern with any of them, or with any of their dealings, except to make money by them.

The Company-system of trading with a Board of Directors and a large body of shareholders is plainly the introduction into Commerce of the system of representative Government with party rule and divided responsibility, of which we are so fond in politics. Under it trade has no doubt vastly expanded, though quantity is now everything and quality is often outside: and thus here, too, a change has taken place. But do we quite realise what the change here is bringing us to? That its effect must be to create competition everywhere? Formerly, the excellence of our wares almost defied competition; but now, with our cheap wares, any nation which chooses to take the trouble can compete successfully with us in point of quality; and, if they choose to put on protective duties, can compete with us in point of cheapness also in the markets under their own control, and in other markets, too, by allowing their manufacturers a bounty on all goods exported.

It is quite clear that other nations are alive to these facts; for rivals are springing up in every direction, and, except in the East, the marts of all countries are being closed against our trade.

CHAPTER II.

UNCONCERNED.

IN spite of these changes, some amongst us are in doubt as to whether the possession of India is a real advantage And few, perhaps, are so anxious about the retention of India and of our Colonies as our fathers were. We do not appear to realise the fact that the loss of India will assuredly deprive us of all our Eastern trade, and yet it is easy to see that it will be so; for not only will the marts of India be closed against us if we lose it,—as firmly closed against us as are those of Central Asia now,—but besides this India, with its raw produce and its people skilled in manufactures from of old, will soon, under a system of protection, become a great manufacturing nation,—will soon with its cheap labor and abundant supply of raw material supplant us throughout the East.

We shall then be left without any foreign trade to employ our large manufacturing population; and at the same time without a sufficient agricultural population to grow food for them.

Our wealth will go in the purchase of food. We shall no longer be able to keep up a large Navy. The end will not be far off then.

Retaining India and our Colonies we are self-contained. They are able to supply us with all the food supplies and the raw produce we require; and with a system of protection in their favor, will be able and willing to take in exchange for their produce a far larger amount of our manufactures than they do at present. There will be an equal division of labor to the best advantage; and if we then turn our attention again to quality instead of quantity—to the points in which we are fitted to excel,—we shall be able to hold our own even in spite of the restrictions in jealous foreign markets.

But having thus cleared the ground a bit, and having shewn that the possession of India is of vital importance to us in our changed circumstances, we may now pass on to consider some of the changes which have taken place of late in the direction of India. No one will now deny, in the face of the fact that Russia has arrived on the very border of Afghanistan, that a very serious change has taken place in the direction of India ; but few, perhaps, appreciate the full significance of the change—the full meaning and strength of the movement in this direction.

We may note, then, that Russia, as a semi-Asiatic power, has, under the federating tendency already noticed, been steadily extending its dominion over Asia, and swallowing up the minor powers, and also the outlying and looser portions of the territory of the greater powers in its neighborhood. Though up to the present, the sunny southern lands have escaped her clutches, and she has as yet been able to appropriate only the more northern countries, where the soil is less fertile and the climate more rigorous than elsewhere. Now, however, she has arrived within measurable distance of the rich provinces of Turkey, Persia, Hindustan, and China. Her way in the direction of European Turkey is indeed, completely barred by Germany ; but we alone bar her progress in the other directions. We alone, with our navy, our wealth, and our abundant resources, and with the population of India to draw upon for soldiers, can give these other countries effectual aid, and can, if we will, prevent them from falling under Russian dominion.

Russia has recently had full proof of our intentions and of our power in finding the greater part of the fruits of her late victories over Turkey snatched from her in 1878 in the hour of triumph. She cannot bear us any-good will for this. After this it was impossible for her any longer to misunderstand. Whether she actually wants India or no, she cannot but perceive that it is necessary now to strain every effort to remove us from her path ; and that she can do this only by turning us out of India. We ourselves have forced her to make up her

mind, in this matter. Her reply has been the storming of Geok Tepe, an advance to the Afghan Frontier, the completion of the railway to Askabad, and its extension towards Merv.

As to whether Russia wants India or no, there is this one fact to remember, that if she get India, she will get it free from all its debts, and with railways and canals ready made. Irrespective altogether of the heavy payment on account of loss by exchange, the charges upon the Indian revenue on account of interest on Government Securities, on account of pensions, and on account of the portion of the profits of railways taken by English shareholders, amount every year to about fifteen millions of pounds sterling. These fifteen millions will be surplus revenue—a sum available for appropriation with India in Russian hands, a sum sufficient to pay two-thirds of the interest at five per cent. on the whole of Russia's debts. Here—irrespective altogether of the profits from India's trade when its manufactures are developed by protection, and of other sources of revenue,—would be a recompense for Russian toil and Russian expenditure in the bleak hills of Central Asia. Here would be a remedy for the chronic deficiency in her budget. Is she likely to let such a prize as this go, if it is to be gained without an excessive expenditure?

It is, however, perfectly plain that, with our navy, our wealth, and our abundant resources, Russia will have little chance of turning us out of India if we have time to prepare, and are in earnest about keeping it, and if the people generally stand by us. We may assume, then, that Russia will endeavor to take us by surprise, and we know that her plan is to take a force to Cabul and then lead the Afghans against us, and at the same time stir up by her emissaries a mutiny in India. This was Skobeleff's plan of attack. This, as Mr Marvin tells us, is the plan approved of by General Soboleff, by General Tchernayeff, by General Kaufmann, by General Grodekoff, by General Annenkoff, and by General Petrusevitch, who all firmly believe it to be feasible ("*The Russians at the Gates of Herat*," page 132).

Russia is rapidly pushing forward a railway towards Afghanistan ; it is already open to Askabad, and is expected to be open to Merv immediately ("*Universal Engineer*," January 2nd, 1886, page 7). At Merv it will be less than a hundred miles from the Afghan frontier.

As soon as the railway is completed to the Afghan frontier, and her depôts are stocked, she will be ready to commence operations in earnest on her own plan. Western Afghanistan will be soon at her mercy ; but she is little likely to put us on our guard by occupying Herat ; she will endeavour to come to an understanding with the Afghans, so as to obtain their co-operation, if necessary, under the threat of annexation.

With a strong Russian force on their border, it is unlikely that the Afghans will be able to resist the pressure which Russia will bring to bear upon them, even if they are altogether averse to join in a prôject for raiding in India, which, too, is unlikely in the descendants of men who for centuries raided in India, who under Ahmed Shah Abdali took Delhi not more than 130 years ago, and who previously on one occasion had ruled India for nearly three centuries. After their experiences in fighting with us in 1878-80, the Afghans will be little inclined to believe that they will be able unaided to resist the might of Russia if Russia threatens them in earnest. They will, however, perceive that we cannot help them without occupying their country, and they will naturally prefer to join Russia in an advance upon India to such an occupation as that.

From our point of view, with the self-satisfied way in which many of us look at things Indian, and with the languid interest which we take in the country, our position in India seems immensely strong, so strong, indeed, that we cannot believe that Russia will ever be so mad as to try and turn us out. When we think over the matter at all, we are not, perhaps, perfectly satisfied with the number of British troops in the country ; but then we comfort ourselves easily with the reflection that we have a large Native army, and that many of our

Native regiments are, man for man, as good as the Cossacks and irregular troops who must form the bulk of any Russian Army invading India; and it appears to us impossible that Russia should be able to transport through the hills an army large enough to cope with ours, and at the same time guard its own communications. So confident, indeed, are we, that some of us would even allow Russia to occupy Afghanistan, in the firm belief that she would proceed to waste her strength and resources in attempts to subdue the country instead of getting a vast accession of strength in the thousands of wild warriors who would join her in a raid into India: in the firm belief also that, if we hold the line of the Indus, we can crush the heads of the Russian columns before they can deploy, should they at any time attempt to pass from the Afghan hills into India.

The idea fixed firmly in our minds is that the struggle for India, if ever it takes place, between the Russians and ourselves, will necessarily take the form of a great battle fought between a Russian force, transported and supplied at great cost and toil through the bare hills of Afghanistan, and our own Indian Army, strongly posted in well-selected positions. We do not care to take the trouble to contemplate seriously the possibility of the struggle taking any other form. We do not give much thought to the skeletons in our cupboard; and yet they are there. Those four mutiny-skeletons in a row—Chupra, 1764; Vellore, 1806; Scinde, 1844; and that of 1857—one for each succeeding generation, it may almost be said—how can we, how dare we forget them? And there are coming—and, indeed, have already come—men who will not let these skeletons be forgotten.

We do not even feel any serious misgivings when we look about and find millions of the people in India—and, indeed, the great mass of the people, outside Bengal Proper, Assam, the Punjab, and parts of Bombay—living in a state of great poverty and indebtedness: we have got so accustomed to seeing them in this miserable condition that we manage even to persuade ourselves that they are contented

with their lot, though we readily admit that the agricultural population are temperate, frugal, and industrious, and therefore fitted for better things.

The condition of the people does not cause us much uneasiness, because we are able in a measure to account to ourselves satisfactorily for it by dwelling upon the poverty of India; and are able, in support of this view, to point to the stunted crops upon unirrigated fields in the over-populated districts where the land is eaten bare by man and beast; where the manure is burnt as fuel for want of fire-wood; where the land gets neither manure nor rest, so great is the pressure upon it. We do not, however, turn to the jungle tracts with their luxuriant vegetation, to the thousands of square miles of good land lying waste. There at once the lie is given to assertions that this is a poor land: there at once the fact becomes patent that all that is needed to make this India the richest country in the world is a re-distribution of the population so as to relieve the pressure upon the over-populated districts, so as to provide labor to open up the thousands of square miles of rich land immediately available for cultivation; and, after these, the other thousands of square miles of good land, which, as in the Punjab, need only irrigation works to bring water from the broad rivers upon the thirsty soil, or retain it by bunds from running to waste; or, as in Eastern Bengal, drainage works to drain the great swamps, and bunds to prevent them from being uselessly flooded by the rivers during the rains or by the tides.

The people are so quiet, so undemonstrative, so unconcerned, that we readily persuade ourselves that they have no deep feelings—have quite forgotten the past. And so too, doubtless, did the Moghul imagine in the days of his power and pride—in the days of glorious Akbar, and Jahangir, and Shah Jahan,—when he was dominant in the land that the Hindu had forgotten the past. But the Hindu was quiet then, only because he had got what he wanted, a strong government—a government strong and just. He had forgotten nothing. And as soon as the Moghul ceased to

be strong, ceased to remember the condition on which he had been entrusted with power, to remember that he had a duty to perform, the duty of supplying a strong and just government, up they rose on every side—Mahratta, Rajpoot, Jât and Sikh—treading down the Moghul; and came right into the halls of Delhi,—Sheodasheo Rao and the Mahrattas, Surajmal and the Jâts—stripping off the silver ceiling of the Shah Mahal, breaking up the Peacock Throne (Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*, Vol. 2, p. 142).

And now, the Hindu and Mussulman alike are quiet and apparently unconcerned, because they have been given a strong government. But clearly they have not forgotten the past. We are astonished at the way in which they cling to their miserable homes. We note the conspicuous failure of our different schemes for emigration, for the occupation of the rich waste lands where the laborer now half-starved could obtain abundance of everything, if he would but move and occupy the ground. We take note of the fact that, when the cooly does move and go in search of work, he invariably returns to his home before the beginning of the rains, even though he has to make long journeys of hundreds of miles on foot. We note also that men of high caste, who take service at a distance, do not, as a rule, take their families with them, but regularly remit their savings home. But to what else is this home-sickness of the people due than to timidity born of reminiscences of great suffering in the past and of fears of the possibility of a recurrence of the like in the future? And does it not shew beyond all doubt that the people do not forget the past with its horrors? In regard to the sufferings of the people in the past, if we have doubts about them, let us listen for a moment to what an eye-witness has to say in regard to their treatment at the hands of the Pindharis,—to Grant Duff's account:—

"Before the Pindharis set out on an expedition, a leader sent notice to the inferior chiefs, and hoisted his standard on a particular day after the cessation of the rains, generally about the Dussera. As soon as the rivers were fordable, and a sufficient number had assembled, they moved off by the most unfrequented routes towards their destination.

Commencing with short marches of about ten miles, they gradually extended them to thirty or forty miles a day, until they reached some peaceful region against which their expedition was intended. Terror and dismay burst at once on the helpless population : villages were seen in flames, wounded and houseless peasants flying in all directions, fortified places shutting their gates, and keeping up a perpetual firing from their walls. The plunderers dispersed in small parties, and spread themselves over the whole face of the country ; all acting on a concerted plan, they swept round in a half-circle, committing every sort of violence and excess,—torturing to extort money, ravishing, murdering, and burning in the defenceless villages ; but seldom venturing on danger, unless the prospect of booty was very certain. When they approached a point on the frontier, very distant from where they had entered, they united and went off in a body to their homes. Whilst they continued their excesses marauders of all descriptions sallied out to join them, or to profit by their presence, and whole districts became a scene of rapine and conflagration.

The ordinary modes of torture inflicted by these miscreants, were heavy stones placed on the head or chest ; red-hot irons applied to the soles of the feet ; tying the head of a person into a *tobra* or bag for feeding horses, filled with hot ashes ; throwing oil on the clothes and setting fire to them ; besides many others equally horrible. The awful consequences of a visitation from the Pindharis can scarcely be imagined by those who have not witnessed them."—Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*, Vol. 3, pp. 328 and 329.

We may find a somewhat similar account in Malcolm's "Central India," Vol. 1, p. 430.

These raids occurred within the present century, within the memory of living men, and extended even into British territory not more than seventy years ago. Bands of these Pindharis regularly attended the march of the Mahratta armies, which at one time or another extended in the latter half of the last century to the Indus on the West, and Bengal and Orissa on the East ; to the foot of the Himalayas on the North, and Cape Comorin on the South. Moreover, the whole country has been swept within the last hundred years by the Pathans from the West, or the Mahrattas from the centre, or the Burmese from the East ; whilst over the face of it also during the same period, or but a few years earlier, there has been fighting : Mahratta has fought with Mahratta, Sindia with Holkar, Holkar with the Peishwa, with the Moghul, the

Pathan, the Rohilla, or the Rajpoot; and these last, too, have fought with one another, desolating the land. Is it wonderful then that during these long years of trouble and suffering the people should have crowded thickly together wherever there was a chief or a fort strong enough to protect them? Is it wonderful that with scenes such as these lingering yet in the memory of the oldest amongst them, or brought vividly to mind by the traditions of their villages, they should be slow to forget their fears of a recurrence, should cling yet to the places where their fathers found safety?

A people which have suffered such things, which have these things in remembrance, need above all a strong and just government, need also cheap means of communication that they may reassure themselves by travelling. And if we wish them to progress, we must not only give them a strong and just government, but must also shew them that we are strongly posted as well as strong, and intend to remain so, and that no sudden rising will be capable of overwhelming us. This, then, the great mass of the people of India—the sober, industrious, agricultural population—ask of us, cowering fearfully in their squalid homes in a way absolutely unintelligible to us.

If we give them this assurance, all else will come in due time—cessation of famine, relief for the ryot from the oppression of the zemindar, and from the extortion of the *bunniah*; prosperity in place of poverty. For the people will move then freely—move out and occupy the rich waste lands, and escape from the pangs of famine, from the grasping zemindar, from the extortionate *bunniah;* and, with the occupation of these lands, will come increased revenue, supplying funds for irrigation or drainage works for the lands which need water, and for the lands which need defences against floods. We can, it is true, help them much by adopting low passenger fares on our railways, by bringing railway travelling within the reach of all, by making it as cheap as travelling on foot. This can be done by using double-storeyed carriages, which have been tried on several lines and

shewn to be safe with slow trains, and to be liked by the Natives. These carriages holding eighty or ninety persons will pay better with a fare of one pie per mile, or even less than ordinary goods traffic which is carried in wagons holding ten to twelve tons, at an average rate of about five annas per ton per mile, especially if emigrant trains are run, in which passengers are carried for long distances only, and tickets have to be taken at least a day before hand, while sufficient carriages only are attached to serve for the number of tickets taken, so as to ensure full-carriage loads, and to enable such room as may remain in the train to be filled up by goods wagons. A journey on foot of twenty miles per day cannot cost much less than 1½ annas per day, or nearly 1 pie per mile, if the extra food allowance necessary when hard work is done is taken into account, and if serai and ferry charges are allowed for. However, our first duty is to be strong and strongly posted.

CHAPTER III.

BUYER AND SELLER.

BUT the Russian has noted that we are not strongly posted. To him our position, with a small force of some sixty or seventy thousands of British troops scattered over a country containing some two hundred and fifty millions of people, most of them in a chronic state of poverty and indebtedness, seems fatally weak, tenable only because there has hitherto been no one strong enough to dispute it with us.

He knows well that a people in a condition in which little can be lost, and much can possibly be gained by a change of masters, provided that the change is rapidly effected, and the new master is as strong as the old, must necessarily be ripe for the operations of the agitator, who understands and is able to dilate upon their grievances and promise relief, more especially if he have behind him the might of a Russian Empire to back him up.

The Russian perceives that, in dealng with the people, he will have the help of the past with its glories and its horrors, and the help of the present with its rivalries, and its race and religious hatreds and jealousies to assist him in getting a hearing. He will commence operations by endeavouring to unsettle the minds of the people, and rouse them from their apathy by pointing to the might of the great Russian Empire, to its irresistible advance through Asia ; by telling them that he has gained over our Native army, and that our small British force alone has to be dealt with ; by pointing out to them how impossible it will be for our scattered British troops to offer effective resistance to the Native army in mutiny aided by a Russian force. With none to contradict him or counteract his influence—for we keep aloof from the people—he will soon succeed in convincing them that the present state of things cannot last, that a change is impending; and, having

thus unsettled their minds, will proceed to work upon their hopes and fears.

He will sympathise with them in their troubles; work upon their hopes by promising an amelioration of their lot, a wiping off of debts, a redress of the grievances perhaps but little understood by us; and work also upon their fears by pointing out that the inevitable change, if it is long delayed—if it is hotly contested—will result in letting loose once more upon the country the *badmash* element (the Pindharis), with a return to the horrors at the beginning of this century; by threatening the Sikhs that he will bring upon them their old foes the Pathans, and make them subject to the cow-killing Mussulman if they fail to join him; and the Mussulmans that he will put them, as now they are in Kashmir, under the cow-worshipping Hindu.

Thus, he will convince the people that it will be to their interest to join him and to make short work of us.

But while he is thus at work among the people generally, unsettling their minds and exciting their hopes and fears, he will be, and, indeed, is doubtless already hard at work also on our railways, on which our system of employing largely Mahomedan engine-drivers and firemen and Hindu station masters and signallers—even on our trunk lines—will give him an opportunity of getting his own agents into railway employment, who will presently get the Native staff into their power, by ascertaining their secrets or giving them loans. He is fully alive to the necessity of being prepared to strike at once at our railways and telegraphs immediately disturbances occur, so as to cut off the communications of our scattered cantonments and make it impossible for our British troops to unite, so as thus to hold our British troops fast bound in their defenceless cantonments, where they will be worn out in endeavours to obtain supplies and transport from a hostile population.

He perceives that we have amongst our British troops no railway corps ready to take over the working of our main lines of railway; and that it will be simply impossible

for us when the country is disturbed to keep open our extensive railway communications with our present railway staff, composed as it largely is of Mahomedans and Hindus, who will necessarily, many of them, side with their fellows if disturbances occur, or at all events, can be won over by bribes or influenced by threats.

He apprehends no difficulty in the matter of breaking up our lines of railway, as he knows that, whenever disturbances occur, the cultivating classes, in order to obtain a supply of iron which is with them an ever-present want for the manufacture of agricultural implements, will need little encouragement to enter heart and soul into the work of breaking up our railways at such times; more especially at places, where iron sleepers are in use with wrought-iron tie-bars, and fittings which can readily be carried off, concealed, and worked up. And in the matter of destroying the rolling stock and bridges, he expects efficient aid from the Native engine-drivers, whether in covering the operations of his agents while using dynamite, or in destroying the rolling stock and the superstructure of the large bridges, by means of skilfully contrived collisions; by leaving half of a goods train behind upon a bridge, and then subsequently sending the other half with the engine under full steam back against the half left standing upon the bridge, so as to break up the superstructure of the bridge by the concussion and subsequent derailment of vehicles; whilst, meantime, the driver and firemen jump down and make off. Gaining these men, who, being mostly Mahomedans, will keep the secret well, he sees that the bridges and the rolling stock of the railways will be at his mercy.

He is thus convinced that, if he watch his opportunity and play his cards well, he will, by unsettling the minds of the people, and then, taking advantage of their race and religious hatreds and jealousies to excite disturbances in the large cities, during which the telegraphs and railways will be broken up, be able, with the help of raids by the hill tribes on the frontier, to hold our British troops fast within their

cantonments, whilst he is employed in organising out of our own Native troops and the troops of the various Native chiefs, a Native army which, with the aid of a Russian force pushed rapidly through Afghanistan, and bringing with it the Afghan army, will deal with our scattered cantonments one by one.

He has, however, no intention of going to the expense of sending a large Russian force to India unless as a *dernier resort*; he believes that that course will be quite unnecessary: for the greater part of the force with which he means to operate against us is already there—is in fact this Native army of ours of which we are so proud.

We gained India, when we were strong and single-minded, by our Native army, with a small nucleus of British troops; and the Russian being strong and single-minded intends to turn us out in the same way.

He sees, though we are slow to admit the fact, that our Native army is a mercenary force, attached to our service only by a small monthly payment, and by the fact that there is no one else throughout the country able to offer employment.

He notes, too, that our Native troops, being armed with breech-loading rifles will, if won over, need from him only a supply of officers taught in Central Asia to speak Hindustani, and a supply of suitable ammunition, and a force of artillery and engineers, which, along with the ammunition, can be rapidly pushed forward through Afghanistan, under the escort of a strong body of cavalry, by agreement with the Amir of Afghanistan, perhaps under the pretext of assisting the Amir against some rebellious tribe; whilst the Hindustani-speaking officers are meanwhile sent by sea as ordinary tourists into India.

He is a diligent student of all literature bearing upon the subject of India, and he believes that, with a people so slow to change, so conservative as are Asiatics, there is much in the past, besides the records of the Indian Mutiny, to guide him in his conduct for the future. Thus, he looks back to the days when the French were our rivals in India, to the days

when rival chiefs were contending for power throughout the country; when there were rival armies throughout the length and breadth of the land: and he finds that the fighting classes changed sides freely then, when tempted by offers of good pay, when attracted by the successes of some enterprising chief or discouraged by failures due to want of enterprise.

He finds, too, that barely ninety years ago we, ourselves, bought a regiment of cavalry and four guns from De Boigne after it had previously been offered to Daolat Rao Sindia and to the Nawab at Lucknow. (Malleson's *Final French Struggles in India and on the Indian Seas*, p. 183.) That a little more than one hundred years ago Madoc, the French adventurer, sold an entire brigade to the Rana of Gohad, which was afterwards cut off to a man, when in the Rana of Gohad's service, by Madhaji Sindia in an ambuscade. (*Ibid*, p. 237.) That at the battle of Lalsot, May 1787, some 14,000 of the infantry under Sindia went over to the Rajpoots under a promise of a sum of two lacs of rupees (£20,000) from the Raja of Jeypur; and that their defection decided the campaign. (*Fall of the Moghúl Empire*, p. 161; Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*, Vol. 3, p. 23.)

He finds, also, that so great is the influence of an adventurous spirit upon the Asiatic mind, that it is powerful to attract even in the face of disasters, even at times when it would seem almost madness to yield to it. Thus he learns that, when Jeswant Rao Holkar had been completely defeated by Sindia's army under Shirzee Rao, near Indore, on the 14th October 1801, with the loss of ninty-eight pieces of cannon and the loss of his capital; and when Dudrenec, the French Commandant of Holkar's regular troops, thinking "it prudent to withdraw from a falling cause" had "listened to Sindia's overtures;" not only did Holkar's own troops refuse to join their commandant in his desertion, but even amongst the triumphant Sindia's own soldiers many chose this very time to desert to the defeated Holkar. (Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*, Vol. 3, p. 202.)

Again, he learns that so great was the effect upon the Native mind of French daring in attacking and storming the strong fort of Gingee in September 1750, that when, subsequently, the Mahomedan Subadar of the Deccan, Nazir Jung, marched against the French in overwhelming strength, the Mahomedan Nawabs of Kuddapah, Savanore, and Kurnaul, worked upon by the intrigues of Dupleix, went over with their troops to the French side on the 16th December 1750, and decided by their defection the issue of the campaign. (Malleson's *History of the French in India*, p. 261.)

He learns, too, that so potent upon the Native mind is the voice of the intriguer, if he be skilled at the work, that it is able to win men over, even in the face of disasters, to obtain a hearing even in the hour of defeat. Thus, in 1752, when our troops, in alliance with the Rajahs of Tanjore and Mysore, and a party of Mahrattas, had defeated and captured the entire French army, under Law, along with their ally Chunda Sahib at Trichinopoly, M. Dupleix was able, by his intrigues, so to work upon our allies and to sow dissension in our camp that, within six weeks after our victory, the Mysoreans and the Mahrattas abandoned our alliance and declared openly for the French. (*Malleson's History of the French in India*, p. 332.)

Studying thus the character of the sepoy by the light of the past and in view of the present, with such side-light as the events of the mutinies of Vellore, and of 1857, and those, too, of the minor mutinies on account of pay or allowances, can afford, he is gradually maturing his plans.

He thus apprehends little difficulty in being able, by working upon the pride and the self-interest of the swaggering sepoy, to convince him that, between a British force on one side, scattered over the country, without any secure positions nearer than the distant sea coast from which to operate, and a compact Russian force on the other side, strongly posted, and, now, as near to Delhi as Calcutta is, but placed at a disadvantage by the stretch of barren hills which have to be

crossed before it can operate with effect, our Native army will be master of the situation ; can dispose of India to whichever of the two nations it may choose ; will be in a position if it wishes to do so, to offer India for sale.

He will dwell much upon the attempt made by the Native army in 1857 to dispose of the country, and will point out that, if, as now, a Russian army had been available then to hold us in check in the Punjab, and Russian officers had been available to direct the movement, it could not have failed, as it failed then.

He will point to the fact that, though a stronger British force now holds India, and though more care is taken now to guard the arsenals and forts, our situation since the Mutiny has changed rather for the worse. For our British troops are still, as then, scattered over the country in defenceless cantonments, and therefore liable to have all their movements towards concentration paralysed by disturbances in the large cities, in the Native States, and amongst the hill tribes on the frontier ; to be held fast bound in their isolated positions by the breaking up of railways and telegraphs; and to have their strength wasted in vain attempts to procure forage and supplies from hostile millions no longer, as before, altogether unarmed and helpless, but now, with the help of the village *mistrees* furnished (from the stores of iron available along every railroad) each man with a rude sword or spear—weapons formidable for surprising and cutting off small foraging parties in the villages, or, at night, the outposts of a detachment which endeavours to move. Whilst, in addition there are now all over the country Russian agents acquainted with all our weak points, able to take advantage of all our mistakes, actively engaged in organising a movement against us.

He will point out that the mass of the people, unsettled in mind by rumors circulating freely through the country of the approach of a great Russian army with the prestige of its victories in Turkey and Central Asia, and of its steady onward march towards India upon it, will, when they hear that the Native army has declared against us, be prepared, to believe

that it will be impossible for our scattered troops to hold their own against such a combination ; to believe that, in order to escape a repetition of the horrors of the past, when the Moghul Empire was in its death throes, it will be to their advantage to make short work of us; and will no longer stand by us, or remain neutral, as they did during the Mutiny.

He will shew the sepoys that, in the end, he is certain of getting possession of the country, and that though in the present they are masters of the situation, and have the country at their disposal, it will not be always so ; it will not be so, if he is obliged to go to the cost of making a further move. He will then proceed to trade upon their fears by using the same threats as he uses to the population at large, by threatening the Sikh, the Hindu, and the Goorkha, that if they fail to join him, he will bring upon them the hated Pathans, will restore the cow-eating Mussulman to the dominant position he held during the days of the Moghul ; and the Mussulman, that he will put him, as now he is in Kashmir, under the rule of the cow-worshipping Hindu, Sikh, or Goorkha. He will trade also upon their hopes and ambitions. He will turn to account the fact, that our army is composed of different races, thus utilising against us the very fact on which we are accustomed to rely as a safeguard against another mutiny.

He will not conceal from them the cost to which he will be put if they fail to join him, if they hold fast to us ; but will use this to convince them that he is in earnest in his offers, and that it will be worth his while to pay them a high price.

He will prove to them that there will be a surplus revenue of at least fifteen crores of rupees if he gets the country and wipes off India's debt and obligations to us; and thus, that he will be in a position to treat them liberally; will be, in fact, much better able to pay them well than we are. He will shew th n that taking the pay of the entire Native army at an average of Rs 10 per man per month, it will cost him only two crores, out of the annual surplus of fifteen crores of rupees,

to double the pay of the whole of our Native Army ; and then proceed to make them large offers.

It is hardly to be supposed that the sepoy, seeing the store he sets upon a few rupees, will be able in the end to resist offers so flattering, so favorable, so clearly genuine, coming from so mighty a power as that of Russia, and pressed home with all the dexterity of agents skilled in intrigue, skilled in taking advantage of the hopes and fears, the hates and prejudices of men, and having, in a land such as this, with its varied races, all with traditions of past glories, or past wrongs, with present religious hates and present grievances, as promising a field as an agitator could well wish for.

With a policy of alienation as shewn in the Preface, keeping us aloof from the people and in ignorance of what is going on amongst them ; and with our British troops scattered all over the country in defenceless positions, where they can be surprised and cut off, or worn out by difficulties in obtaining supplies from a hostile population—or, at all events, so hampered in their movements, by the destruction of the railways and by the difficulties of marching, that it will be impossible for them to concentrate and offer effective opposition to an advancing Russian force, joined by the Afghan army, and bringing supplies of ammunition for the rifles of our mutinous Native troops—it does not appear that we have at present any effective reply to make to the Russian Programme.

CHAPTER IV.

REDEEMING.

"The sage precept of Hyder Ali, that the English should keep their white soldiers like hunting leopards in cages, and slip them suddenly and fiercely at the enemy."—*Kaye's "History of the Sepoy War in India," Vol. I, p.* 231.

IF, however, we choose to take advantage of the time still left us, choose to set to work in earnest ere it is too late, we shall yet be able to offer a very effective—indeed, an unanswerable—reply to the Russian Programme.

To be able to do this we must, following the sage advice of Hyder Ali, proceed at once to concentrate and cage our British troops in strong positions, where supplies of all kinds will be assured to them ; and then to make sure of the railways by providing,—as we have ample opportunities on our State Railways of doing,—a trained British Railway Corps, to take over the working of the main lines if the country be disturbed, and also a proper system of defences for the large stations, workshops, and bridges, so as thus to make it impossible for our British troops to be surprised or held in check ; so as thus to enable them to strike at once in full strength in any direction, or, in case of need, to await in security the arrival of reinforcements, to wait until England has had time to put forth her strength.

The most important undoubtedly of all the positions open to us is Kashmir, infinitely the most important of all.

The strength of Kashmir as a military position has frequently been pointed out from Vigne's time downwards.

In Kashmir we have, in fact, ready at hand, a great fortified camp, which can be made absolutely impregnable, and which wants only a railway up the Jhelum valley, with a branch going *viâ* Abottabad, in addition to an extension of the existing Sealkot Railway by Jummoo (lines presenting, apparently, no great Engineering difficulties), to make it immediately available.

The Kashmir valley is, roughly speaking, about ninety miles long and twenty broad. But a considerable portion of the best part of it is now covered by swamps which could, however, easily be drained, by deepening the bed of the Jhelum in two or three places near Baramoola and clearing away obstructions, and at the same time providing bunds to control the river, when in flood, in its course through the valley. In this way, 150 or 200 square miles of rich land could probably be added to the area available for cultivation, and thus food-supplies for some fifty or sixty thousand men be obtained without trenching upon the abundant food-supplies of the inhabitants: and it is noticeable that the Natives have a tradition that the whole valley was once covered by a large lake, which was drained by Casyapa, the son of Marichi, by deepening the bed of the Jhelum at Baramoola. (*East India Gazetteer*, Vol. I, p. 368.)

A water-supply for working machinery at arsenals or factories is available everywhere. The people of the valley are skilled weavers, and, when trained, make clever artisans. Thus arsenals, factories, and workshops could be provided and worked without difficulty, and an army of occupation be rendered wholly independent of supplies from outside.

The troops themselves would be stationed in a perfectly healthy climate, with plenty of room for amusements of all kinds and abundant opportunities for healthy employment, in road-making or in drainage-works, in building huts or barracks, or in workshops; and, instead of being enfeebled in health or reduced in numbers by residence in the plains, would be in full strength and in the enjoyment of vigorous health.

Holding the Kashmir valley and its approaches in force with British troops, after it has been properly prepared and furnished for defence, we shall secure the Punjab, and thus the fidelity of the Sikhs and up-country Mussulmans—the best of our Native infantry and cavalry troops—and can use them with confidence, along with British troops, on th frontier, even if our Native troops elsewhere be disaffected. And should the Russians, then, despairing of success by their

intrigues, attempt to invade India, and succeed in forcing a passage through Afghanistan, we, with the impregnable Kashmir position to fall back upon and to furnish supplies and *materiel*, and with the Punjab railways to enable us to operate freely in any direction, shall have the whole line of the Russian communications absolutely at our mercy, over some hundreds of miles of difficult country, broken up by hills or intersected by great rivers and numerous *nullahs*, if they attempt to advance into India; shall absolutely command the only line by which their advance is possible, so long as, at the same time, we hold the sea, and are able to strike at their communications through Karachi and the Indus Valley Railway, if they attempt to pass into India through Southern Afghanistan by masking our Quetta position.

If we make proper dispositions, no force which the Russians can transport through the bare Afghan hills will be able to expel us from Kashmir, for we can, from the Kashmir position, prevent them from ever reaching the fertile, well-cultivated portions of India, from which supplies could be drawn; and can, therefore, compel them to bring their supplies through Afghanistan, and prevent them, thus, from the difficulty of obtaining supplies, from appearing in overwhelming strength. At the worst, we can hold on to Kashmir until reinforcements arrive, or until England puts forth her strength and strikes at Russia in the Black Sea, or through Persia.

The Kashmir position is thus an absolute necessity to us; but it has, unfortunately, been sold by the Treaty of Amritsar dated 16th March, 1846, for seventy-five lakhs of Rupees (£750,000), after it had been ceded to us by the Lahore Durbar under the provisions of Article 4 of the Treaty of Lahore, dated 9th March, 1846. It is worthwhile to look at the Treaty by which Kashmir was sold (see *Aitchison's Treaties*, Vol. 2, pp. 375-77); it is so singularly brief.

But can not Kashmir be redeemed? The people are almost exclusively Mussulmans; the ruler to whom it has been sold is a Sikh, an alien. Would it not be possible, therefore, to effect an exchange, to give the Sikh ruler Sikh terri-

tory in exchange for his Mahomedan territory? The possession of Kashmir is now of vital importance; no price we could afford to pay could well be too great to give for it.

It may be well to remember that the terms of the original Treaty have already been modified. The Treaty provided originally for the sale of Chumba along with Kashmir; but Chumba was redeemed in 1847, by giving, in exchange apparently, Badrawar and the Lakhimpur Taluka. (*Aitchison's "Treaties,"* Vol. 2, p. 371.) Cannot the Treaty, therefore, be further modified so as to redeem Kashmir? Jummoo and Badrawar might be left, and in exchange for the Kashmir valley, we might give Sikh territory in the plains between the Chenab and Ravee rivers, right down to the Punjab Northern State Railway, with the cities of Sealkot and Wazirabad, in place of the city of Srinagar. It is not likely that such an exchange of Sikh territory for Mahomedan territory would be unacceptable to a Sikh Ruler. But if it were not acceptable, the offer of the Sikh city of Amritsar with the rich territory between the Ravi and Beas, up to the Chumba hills, would be a very splendid one, and absolutely irresistible in the eyes of a Sikh.

If, however, it be impossible thus to redeem Kashmir, we can at least obtain ground for cantonments, factories, railways, &c., within the valley and approaches and for the defensive works on the hills; and, as a set off, can reclaim the great swamps in the valley, and give the reclaimed land in exchange.

But, though the Kashmir position infinitely transcends in importance any other we can select, other positions also are necessary. We want one, to control the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Bengal. For this, probably, a position on the hills near Amarkantak, in the Central Provinces, would be the best. When the Katni-Ameria Railway is extended past Amarkantak to Bilaspur, and the direct Railway, *vid* Nagpur, between Calcutta and Bombay is completed, the Amarkantak position will be about 600 miles by rail from Calcutta, 300 from Allahabad, 800 from Bombay, and will thus be within a day's run by rail of the large cities in

the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Bengal. It would also command the great wheat-growing districts of the Central Provinces, which are able to furnish supplies to any extent required; and would cover the advance of a force landed either at Calcutta or Bombay.

With the Kashmir and Amarkantak positions held in force by British troops, and with suitable defences and arrangements for working on the railways, we should control the whole of Upper India, but should want one other minor position for Southern India, say, at Ootacamund.

By exercising our British troops for a few days, from time to time, in the work they would have to do, in the event of a rising, in occupying important points along the railway, and appearing in force, at the shortest notice, in the middle of the great cities, we should not only keep them ready for their work, but should effectually remind the great cities, by the sudden apparition from time to time of a strong force in their midst, that we held a tight hold over them—should, perhaps, more effectually remind them of our strength and of our control than we do now, by permanently posting a small force in their neighborhood in an open, defenceless cantonment; and should do this, probably, without more expense than is now involved by the annual movement of troops in connection with reliefs.

We shall have to occupy, indeed, the old historical forts such as Delhi, Agra, and the like; but this can be done in connection with the railway defences by a small force.

Thus posted, we shall convince the Native mind that we intend to keep possession of the country; that it will be impossible to get rid of us; that it will be wholly to their interest to keep in with us. We shall counteract the great fear which will come over the land when the Russian railway is completed to Panjdeh, and a Russian force is massed there within about 500 miles of our frontier, not further from India than Allahabad from Calcutta, than Peshawar from Delhi, and between, only the Afghans—only the old invaders, the late raiders in India, the horror of the Punjab, and of

Upper India; shall thus counteract the great terror which will seize upon the people, lest the days of the last century should return,—days of fearfulness and of great tribulation, when the land was devastated by contending armies, when, after them, the wild Pathan was let loose on one side, and on the other the dread Pindhari hordes.

Without doubt, the emissaries of Russia will come, will pass through the length and breadth of the land unknown to us, or perhaps even well known, but unrestrained, from our jealousy of interference with the liberty of the individual, or even from indifference. We have no genius for intrigue, no knowledge of the art; at that work the Russians will have a clear field. But, if once the people are persuaded by them that we are not in earnest about holding the country, that we are no match, with a scattered force, for the might of Russia, when joined by the sepoys, and that, therefore, it is to their interest to get rid of us, in order to save themselves, from a repetition of the horrors of the past, they will not remain neutral as in the Mutiny, but will make common cause against us, will join with the sepoys in driving us out.

It is too much—after a mutiny such as that of 1857, in which the Hindu and the Mussulman united, and with a list of four, or, including that of Barrackpore in 1824, even five mutinies amongst our Native troops in a period of less than one hundred years—to expect that the whole of the sepoys will remain faithful, will reject Russian offers of large pay skilfully proferred, when rumors are about, that a mighty Russian army is at hand, when visions of glorious opportunities of looting are conjured up by the offer of employment with the great Russian army in its irresistible progress through the East. What has our service to offer in comparison—our service, with our scruples about conquest, our tenderness for the *bunniah*? And if one portion of the army [illegible] these offers, the rest must necessarily follow, to avoid the chance of being set aside, of being placed in an inferior position, when the Russian is supreme.

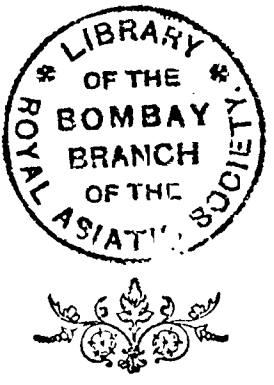
The French, so long as they were strong and enterprising, found no difficulty in obtaining as many Native troops as they wanted when they were contending with us for the possession of India. It is not likely, then, that Russia, with her might and the prestige of her victories and of her advance, will find any difficulty either in obtaining as many Native troops as she wants, when she is in a position to employ them, and when the people are convinced that she is indeed coming.

A few months of breathing-time will be available in which to put our house in order. But, if we allow the opportunity to pass unutilised, if we wait until the Russian preparations are completed, it will be too late then to begin. We shall be restrained then from doing anything by the fear lest any changes should be construed by the Natives as an acknowledgment of weakness, and precipitate matters. We shall have, as we had often to do in the time of the Mutiny, to affect to believe, that all is well, though we may know well that a spirit of disaffection is abroad ; shall have to affect to trust, though we may be convinced that there are the gravest reasons for distrust. We shall be fast bound in our present posts, and the selling of Kashmir will be followed by the sale of India by the sepoys to the Russians.

Without doubt a strong position in the direction of Kandahar is necessary to prevent the occupation of Afghanistan ; but such a position is absolutely useless, unless we secure our base, and unless we make sure of our position in India.

Whether we believe that Russia has designs upon India or no, we are bound to secure ourselves in India ; for if we do not do so, assuredly the mere proximity of such an aggressive power as Russia, will unsettle the minds of the people, will cause a deep feeling of unrest in the minds of men, who have the horrors of the past still in memory. Consider what our plight will be, with our British troops scattered all over the country, if some day we learn that a Russian force, accompanied by the Afghan army, is advancing through Afghanistan, perhaps, well on its way, at the invitation of the Amir

of Afghanistan, before we hear anything of it—ostensibly for the purpose of assisting the Amir in a quarrel with some of the tribes ; if we find at the same time that our Native army is disaffected, corrupted by Russian emissaries ; and find also that the rumor of the advance of the Russian force is causing great excitement amongst the people. How shall we be able to act vigorously then, fast-bound, paralysed, as we shall be, for want of a little foresight, for want of strong positions?



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